



Eat Fruits and Vegetables For Power Performance

How You Can Score 5 A Day?

The sports season is upon us. Eat right throughout the day, especially during the busy sports season. It's so important to staying healthy and energized. Including five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day can be a great start to better overall health and performance. Here are some no-prep healthy snacks for before and after practice:

- small apples
- seedless grapes
- mini bananas (also known as apple bananas)
- a container of cherry tomatoes
- a bag of berries
- orange quarters
- crunchy raw snowpeas or green beans
- dried fruit like cranberries and apricots



Don't forget to serve fruits and vegetables during meals, too—to add nutrients and fiber to your “**training table**” at home. **Serve 2** instead of just one.

The Warm Up

When you need to eat later than usual due to a sporting event, try these healthy tips to hold off hunger while dinner is cooking:

- Keep some sliced vegetable strips in the fridge for before-dinner snacking. Dip them in your favorite low-fat dressing.
- Put out a bowl of dried fruit.
- Pour some salad—pre-washed, pre-cut salad in a bag is a truly great convenience. One cup accompanied by low-fat, bottled dressing is one 5 A Day serving ready in one minute.
- Slice cucumbers and serve them in red-wine vinegar with a sprinkle of black pepper.
- Keep a large container of fruit salad, sprinkled with lemon juice, in the fridge to have anytime during the week. Add bananas right before serving to prevent browning.

The Main Event



At last, mealtime! Here are some no-hassle, quick ways to get delicious fruits and vegetables on the table.

Salads and Sides:

- Open cans of kidney beans, wax beans, chickpeas, and green beans, and toss with a low-fat vinaigrette for an ultra-fast bean salad.
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- Try adding fresh herbs to vegetables before you roast, stir-fry or steam them. For example, tomatoes go well with basil and oregano, and carrots go well with dill.
- Broil sliced vegetables such as zucchini, bell peppers, eggplant and tomatoes, for just a few minutes until they blacken around the edges. Serve warm with a light dressing of lemon juice, reduced-fat mayonnaise, and black pepper.
- Boil corn on the cob and squeeze lemon juice all over it. The kids will love it.

Entrées:

- Top grilled or broiled meat with salsa. Each ½ cup of salsa is a serving.
- Add grapes and sliced apples and pears to chicken salad. Or add tomatoes, radishes, and green bell peppers to tuna salad.
- Remember beans count as a 5 A Day serving. Drain and rinse some canned black beans, and wrap them up in tortillas with sliced bell peppers. Lay the tortillas in a baking dish, sprinkle with low-fat shredded cheese, and bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes.
- Add 1-2 cups of frozen veggies to canned soup before heating; serve on top of rice in a shallow bowl.
- Use a 12-inch, pre-baked packaged pizza crust to create a 20-minute dinner; add sliced zucchini, fresh spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, garlic, onions, and cheese and bake at 400 degrees until the cheese bubbles.

Overtime

Also known as dessert!

- Stock up on frozen fruit when it's on sale, but watch the sugar content—natural sweetness is all you need. Try heating frozen cherries and eating them alone or with low-fat vanilla frozen yogurt.
- Puree frozen strawberries or blueberries and serve on top of angel food cake.
- Slice up a new kind of fruit—starfruit, for example, or mango, or papaya.

I'll Sit on the Bench Tonight, Thanks

For times you'd rather pick up food to take home, try these tips.

- Take home some Chinese stir-fried vegetables and rice; try adding a shot of low-sodium soy sauce and wrapping everything in a big lettuce leaf, like a burrito.
- Order extra vegetables on your pizza.
- Try a veggie burrito when you order take-out Mexican food. Make sure it's light on cheese and topped with plenty of fresh, cool tomatoes, lettuce, bell peppers, and salsa.
- Supplement your take-out dinner with fruits and vegetables from home—a glass of 100-percent fruit or vegetable juice, a salad, microwaved vegetables, or some fruit for dessert.
- Buy prepared foods from your grocery store's salad bar and deli—and then fortify them with extra fruits and vegetables from home. For example, buy pre-made pasta salad and add steamed vegetables or a drained, rinsed can of beans.
- Look on the restaurant menu for vegetables that are steamed or roasted. Avoid vegetables that are sauteed or fried.



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